

Tips for Writing a Persuasive Brownfields Assessment or Cleanup Application, and Technical Assistance Resources

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Developing the application:

Two Types of Criteria

- ⌘ Threshold criteria: Requirements that you must meet for your application to be considered. Evaluated on a pass/fail basis.
- ⌘ Ranking criteria: Points are given for your responses to questions about the project, its likely do-ability, success and benefits, and how you will manage the grant.

Threshold criteria -- briefly



- ⌘ Applicant eligibility
- ⌘ Site Ownership (Cleanup Grants)
- ⌘ Description of Boundaries of Jurisdiction (RLF)
- ⌘ Letter from State or Tribal Environmental Authority acknowledging that the applicant plans to establish a revolving loan fund/conduct cleanup/assessment activities and is planning to apply for federal grant funds.

Threshold criteria, continued



- ⌘ Cleanup and (Site-Specific) Assessment
Applications: Site Eligibility and Property
Ownership Eligibility
- ⌘ RLF only: Oversight Structure and Legal
Authority to Manage a Revolving Loan Fund.
Requires legal opinion from counsel.
- ⌘ RLF and Cleanup grants: 20% Cost Share (but
can request exemption from this)
- ⌘ Cleanup grants: Cleanup authority and oversight
structure

Cleanup Grants Only: Community Notification



- ⌘ Provides the community with notice of applicant's intent to apply for a grant and opportunity to submit comments.
- ⌘ Place ad in local newspaper/equivalent at least two weeks before submitting proposal indicating proposal is available for review/ comment.
- ⌘ Applicant must hold a public meeting to discuss the draft proposal and consider public comments.

Ranking Criteria #1: Community Need



Describe the health, welfare, environmental, and financial needs of the targeted community as it is affected by the presence of brownfields.

A. Health, Welfare and Environment

- ☒ Number and size of the brownfields and their health, welfare, and environmental impacts.
- ☒ Health and welfare of sensitive populations.

Community Need, cont'd



B. Financial Need

- ☒ Economic impact of brownfields on the targeted community -- e.g., poverty rates, household income, unemployment rate, other demographic information that demonstrates the economic needs of the targeted community's residents.
- ☒ Factors such as fiscal condition or population size that limit your ability to draw on other sources of funding for the cleanup of brownfield sites.

Ranking Criteria #2:

Program/Project Description and Feasibility of Success

A. Program description:

- ⌘ RLF: How you will set up and manage the program; resources and capabilities.
- ⌘ Cleanup: Show sufficient resources to complete project. Show ability to complete project in a timely manner.
- ⌘ Assessment: Focus on conducting site assessments.

B. Budget and leveraging additional resources

- ⌘ Option for local government to use 10% of grant funds for health monitoring and related activities.

Program/Project Description, cont'd



C. Programmatic Capability

- ☒ How your organization has managed previous EPA or other federal grants
- ☒ Staff expertise and qualifications
- ☒ Ability to manage grant and perform all phases of work
- ☒ Any adverse audit findings

Ranking Criteria #3:

Community Engagement and Partnerships

How will you engage the targeted community in this project? What partnerships have you established?

- A. Plan for involving the affected community.
- B. Describe your efforts or plans to develop partnerships with local/state/tribal environmental and health agencies and other relevant governmental agencies.
- C. Describe key community-based organizations involved in your program and their roles.

Ranking Criteria #4:

Program/Project Benefits

Some considerations:

- ⌘ How will anticipated outcomes of program/project improve public health and safety, the economy, and the environment of the targeted community?
- ⌘ How will these outcomes contribute to your overall community “vision” for brownfield revitalization?
- ⌘ EPA will consider how public health issues are addressed during the program, the anticipated benefits of redevelopment, and the incorporation of sustainable practices.

Program/Project Benefits, cont'd



A. Welfare and/or Public Health

- ⌘ Environmental, social, and/or public health benefits anticipated from the redevelopment of sites
- ⌘ How nearby and sensitive populations in your targeted community will be protected from contaminants during cleanup work on sites.

B. Economic Benefits and/or Greenspace

- ⌘ Economic benefits like new jobs, increased tax base.
- ⌘ Non-economic benefits of sites used for greenspace or other non-profit purposes.

C. Environmental Benefits from Infrastructure Reuse/Sustainable Reuse

- ☒ Using existing infrastructure
- ☒ green buildings
- ☒ energy efficiency
- ☒ water management
- ☒ green remediation
- ☒ construction and demolition materials recycling

More on Sustainable Reuse: Construction & Demolition Recycling/Reuse

- ⌘ Recycle, reuse on site, or sell/donate to someone else for reuse.
- ⌘ Some ways of reusing on site:
 - ☑ Deconstruct and reuse brick, lumber, etc. in constructing/renovating new building
 - ☑ Reuse appliances, plumbing, doors, windows, etc.
 - ☑ Pulverize concrete and other materials for use as backfill
 - ☑ Mulch vegetative debris

Demolition of Needham, MA Public Library

Photo source:
City of Needham, MA website



Deconstruction and preparation for reuse

Photo Source: "A Guide to Deconstruction," Deconstruction Institute



Benefits of C&D reuse



- ☑ Can make project more financially viable (see EPA case studies)
- ☑ Better for the environment and public health
 - fewer materials wasted; less trucking away of materials and burial in landfills; fewer air emissions from demolition and from landfills.
- ☑ Get points as part of LEED and other green building certification programs

Thinking more about a project's benefits...

Your town is applying for a grant to clean up a contaminated former mill and replace it with a new park and playground close to families that live nearby. What benefits do you expect to result?

⌘ Public safety/community: May reduce blight, crime, vandalism, litter; more residents walking to park may increase feeling of safety, even give people an opportunity to meet each other.

Photo source: Maryland DNR website



Greenspace benefits, cont'd

- ⌘ Environment and public health: Especially if there is a lack of greenspace in the community, allows people to get exercise, fresh air, maybe lose weight, improve their health. Reduces carbon emissions, urban heat island effect.
- ⌘ Economic: New park may increase property values. May help to revitalize area, even encourage new businesses (café to serve folks looking for refreshments?).

Thought exercise, continued: How could you make this project *even greener?!*

- ⌘ Green remediation
- ⌘ Construct playground out of recycled materials -
- even reuse materials from the mill building!
- ⌘ Include community garden. Collect water for garden in rain barrels. Permeable pavement.
- ⌘ Night lighting powered by solar panels!
- ⌘ Use Integrated Pest Management rather than chemical herbicides to control weeds/pests.
- ⌘ Install bike racks.

Sustainable Redevelopment of a Brownfield Site: Save The Bay Center, Providence, RI.

Before: Former municipal dump. Source: Save the Bay website



After: Environmental education center and coastal greenspace

Source: Save The Bay website



Sustainable aspects of Save the Bay project



- ⌘ Green roof covers 5,100 sq ft with 12,312 plants
- ⌘ The amphitheatre is built from about 1,000 linear ft of reclaimed granite curbing found on site.
- ⌘ The steel superstructure, framing and metal roof are all recyclable.
- ⌘ The use of light fixtures connected to daylight-sensitive dimming and motion sensors reduces electric consumption by 37%.
- ⌘ Recycled newspapers were used for acoustic insulation.

Technical assistance for grantwriting: Illinois ResourceNet



- ⌘ Based at University of Illinois at Chicago, in conjunction with U of I Extension
- ⌘ Provides education and technical assistance to municipalities and non-profits on seeking and applying for federal grants - free of charge.
- ⌘ Resources include webinars, workshops, and one-on-one feedback on grantwriting.

Illinois ResourceNet, cont'd



⌘ Visit our website and sign up for our e-newsletter at
<http://www.illinoisresource.net/>.

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Technical assistance: TAB Program



- ⌘ Based at Kansas State University (also at Illinois State University)
- ⌘ Brownfields Technical/Grantwriting assistance offered at no charge
- ⌘ TAB-EZ website includes sample applications and program for writing application: <http://www.tabez.org/>